

TABLE TALK / TO THE POINT :

NOVEMBER 2011

MV QUEEN ELIZABETH : The new Queen Elizabeth is not as impressive as the Queen Elizabeth 2 or the Queen Mary 2 and is more in keeping with the type of cruise ships being built today with no poop deck and very little forecastle deck.

She was built in Italy at Fincantieri together with her sister ship Queen Victoria which is more or less identical. The finish on her is excellent with first class woodwork, tiling and carpeting. Above the master staircase is an enormous design of the ship's predecessor, the RMS QUEEN ELIZABETH, which was the largest ship in the World for much of her career, in different types of woods in various colours which was executed by Lord Lyndley the Queen's grandson. I think it is called marquetry.

The keel was laid on the 2nd July 2009 and she sailed on her maiden voyage on the 10th October 2010 so has just had her first birthday.

Her length is 965 feet beam 120 feet and draught 26 feet with an air draught of 181 feet; I find that imperial measure is far superior to metric when discussing ships.

Gross tonnage is 90,901 tons and displacement 48,047 tons with a few other complicated tonnages.

There are twin Azimuthing pods propulsion units and three bow thrusters, each rated at 2,200 Kw,

with the usual stabilizers. Each pod weighs 135 tons and absorbs 17 600 kilowatts of power.

The two propellers are 17 feet in diameter and each have four bolted fixed blades weighing 5.3 tons each.

Her speed is a maximum of 24.3 knots with astern speed 60% of ahead with Queen Mary 2 having a speed of 34 knots.

Electrical power is supplied by MAK diesel engine driven generators producing 63 380 Kilowatts. The prime movers are four 12 cylinder and two 8 cylinder diesels.

Heavy fuel stored on board amounts to 3,456 cubic meters which will sail the ship for 17 days.

Total water storage capacity on board is 3152 tons and three evaporators can produce 1700 tons of water each day

For the production of steam there are six exhaust gas boilers and two oil fired boilers.

There are 19 engineer, electrical and electronics officers on board and 55 technicians.

On watch are only two engineers and one motorman yet in the golden days we had more personnel on watch on an old tramp. For the production of good food there are more than 200 of the crew involved so maybe they get their priorities right.

I do not believe the security is adequate as when we park our cars we employ a car guard yet with a cruise ship costing hundreds of millions of any currency they appear to be just left lying around. I believe there should be an armed gunboat around the vessel at anchor or alongside and heavily armed guards on the quayside. There are a number of Ghurkas on board but what the internal security is I have no idea; Captain Wells talks a lot about it but says nothing. There are notices on the ship's sides telling small boats not to come within 50 meters but they are in English not Arabic and I was not aware that bombers read notices.

There are 12 decks six of which are for accommodation and the remainder for restaurants, bars lounges, shopping, health and fitness, entertainment and services. There are 14 bars or lounges

where you can get a very good pint of Boddington's for around fifty rand. Excellent food is served 24 hours a day in several restaurants. The theatre is big and magnificent with wonderful entertainment and there is a casino to spend your money if you are that way inclined. Deck three is for joggers after 7am but I exercised every morning at 5-30 before the rush; 3 laps to a mile and in the North Atlantic it was certainly invigorating.

Of the 3000 people on board there are 20 passenger nationalities of which the largest is British with 1800 out of 2000. In the crew of 1000 there are 51 nationalities with Philippines being the largest at 500 and South Africa having 38 members. The crew is well trained to be sweet and nice to everyone even in the face of any nonsense they may get from some nasty passengers.

The special attractions are a croquet lawn, Bowling Green, tennis court and driving range for the golfers. Swimming pools and sauna baths assist the health clinic and gymnasium to keep you fit and there are lots of young ladies to give you all sorts of massages of the respectable kind of course.

The latest money spinner of Cunard is to change their ships registration from Southampton to the Bahamas. This will permit the Captain of the ships to perform marriages which they cannot do on British flag ships. Our Captain Banks had performed 13 weddings on a two week cruise on another ship so when he had time to look after his ship I do not know.

The cruise was a return trip from Southampton to New York and up the East coast of North America to Quebec stopping at Halifax Nova Scotia where Samuel Cunard was born. A ceremony was held with ships officers, passengers and local dignitaries that included 18 descendants of Cunard attending to unveil a statue of Samuel Cunard. Cunard may be expensive but it is the best. – *Our Globe-Trotting Travel Correspondent*

While serving as a fast Troopship during World War II the RMS QUEEN ELIZABETH was approaching Cape Town when the freighter DALFRAM hit a mine laid by the German Raider DOGGERBANK, formerly Andrew Weir's SPEYBANK, in the approaches to the Port. QE was quickly diverted to Simon's Bay where she arrived at 09:00 on 3 May 1942. She must have been quite a sight.

SUBMARINE ESCAPE TRAINING SIMULATOR (SETS) : Early in October the Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans Thabang Makwetla officially opened the SA Navy's Submarine Escape Training Simulator (SETS) at the SAN Diving School in the West Dockyard at Naval Base Simon's Town. This facility is part of Project *Wills*, the R8.152 billion project involving the acquisition of three *Type 209* submarines. The SA Navy Submarine Service benchmarked the design of this facility against German and Swedish submarine escape simulators, the Navy says in a statement. The *Type 209* submarine was designed and built in Germany, "and our submariners completed their submarine escape training in [that] ... country before sailing the vessels to South Africa."

The facility will be used to train submariners for submarine escape procedures and each of the approximately 120 operational SA Navy submariners must undergo this training annually. Currently the *Type 209* submarine is one of the most widely used submarines in the world, with 13 countries using approximately 60 boats. Not all of these countries have SETS and many countries (including Germany and India) have expressed an interest in using this new facility, the statement adds. Submariners, the Navy notes, work in one of the most difficult environments on earth. As part

of the highly rigorous training, each submariner must be able to escape from a submerged submarine. This is also one of the entry requirements into this elite branch of the SA Navy. Without a submarine escape simulator of its own, the SA Navy would have had to make use of similar facilities abroad, with huge cost implications for the entire length of service of the *Type 209* submarines (i.e. 120 submariners sent abroad annually for up to 2 weeks for more than 30 years).

The South African Navy's SETS is quite unique in that it contains a full scale replica of the tower of the *Type 209* submarine. Two people can escape via the tower at a time, the process being as follows:

- The submariners (dressed in specially designed escape suits) walk into the replica of the tower on the ground level of the facility.
- They climb into the submarine tower replica, and close the hatch behind them. This area is then flooded, and they open the top hatch of the tower.
- The submariners are then met by Navy divers at the bottom of the tank, and they then swim towards the surface, approximately 13 meters above them.

The SETS is also equipped with a forward hatch with a skirt to simulate a rush escape from the forward hatch of the submarine. It is envisaged that this facility will contribute to the local economy of Cape Town, with many foreign submariners coming to the SA Navy to use the facility to train their escape procedures. – *NOASA Spindrift /Spunyarn*.

Although the SAN operated French built Daphné Class submarines for some thirty years it did not have a SETS facility. This was because the Daphnés did not have internal watertight bulkheads to allow flooded parts of the boat to be isolated. The designers claimed that as long as the pressure hull remained intact the submarine would be able to reach the surface with all on board. In case of emergency a cast iron ballast weight in the keel could be jettisoned to give the submarine positive buoyancy.

HMS CLYDE : The Royal Navy's Falklands Islands Patrol Vessel *HMS Clyde* arrived in Simon's Town this morning (3 November) for a two-months Docking and Essential Defects (DED) period in the Armscor Dockyard. The vessel is scheduled to remain in the South Atlantic until 2018 with crew changes being carried out as required by flying replacements into Port Stanley. Logistic support is provided by a civilian company which has key personnel based in the Falklands and they will no doubt be managing the DED in Simon's Town.



HMS CLYDE – functional rather than attractive. – Photo, Wikipedia

This is the three year old ship's first visit to Simon's Town but hopefully it will not be the last. In January 2011 the Brazilian Government denied the ship access to Rio de Janeiro in sympathy with Argentina's claim to sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas).

- *NOASA Spindrift/Spunyarn and Wikipedia.*

Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it incorrectly and applying the wrong remedies. - Groucho Marx

NAVY NEWS : The commission of inquiry into the arms deal could well learn a lot from observing the comings and goings of the Fleet. SAS *Drakensberg*, SAS *Mendi* and SAS *Queen Modjadji* all participated in Exercise INTEROP EAST, visiting Dar es Salaam and then exercising with the French Navy. On completion, *Mendi* resumed her anti-piracy duties off Mozambique where she will remain until mid November.

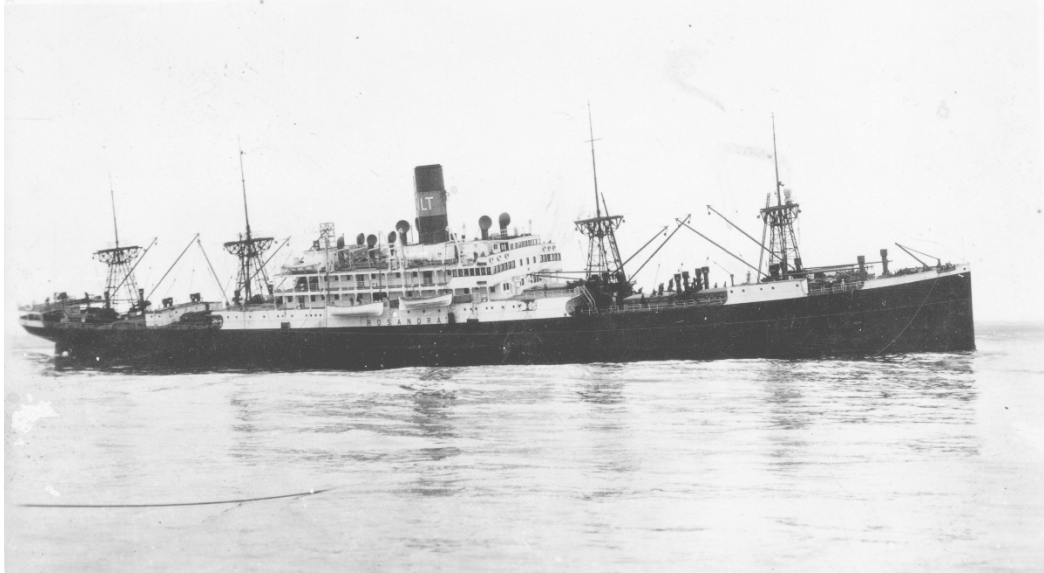
SAS *Amatola* spent the last weekend in Cape Town to assist in a Maritime Security Conference but will be back by the time this goes out. She is due to undergo maintenance for the remainder of the year as her four month stint on anti-pirate duties took its toll on her.

Early in November *Drakensberg* and *Charlotte Maxeke* will be off the West Coast along with the two River class vessels SAS *Umzimkulu* and SAS *Umkomaas*. They will all be participating in Joint Exercise INDLOVU, along with the other three services and Special Forces.

In the mean time SAS *Isandlwana* is preparing for her first deployment to Mozambique for anti piracy patrols. This will be a very testing deployment as she departs in November and will spend Christmas at sea, returning in March 2012 after four months on operational duty. – *NOASA Spindrift/Spunyarn.*

'oggin/'ogwash – RN slang term for the sea. Spending a long time at sea, as the S A Naval vessels are doing at the moment, is known as "Floggin' the 'oggin." – with acknowledgements to Jackspeak by Rick Jolly.

A BLAST FROM THE PAST :



SS ROSANDRA SEEN IN SOUTH AFRICAN WATERS DURING THE 1930s.. THE SHIP IS LISTING TO STARBOARD AND SOME OF THE BOATS ARE SWUNG OUT, SUGGESTING THAT THE PHOTOGRAPH MIGHT HAVE BEEN TAKEN WHEN THE SHIP GROUNDING SOUTH OF WALVIS BAY AND HAD TO BE TOWED OFF BY SAR & H TUGS.

During the 1930's Lloyd Triestino operated an Italy-South Africa service with the passenger /cargo ships TIMAVO (7 549/20), DUCHESSA D'AOSTA (7 872/21), PIAVE (7 565/21) and ROSANDRA (8 034/21).

The quartet, all built in their home port of Trieste, was powered by triple expansion steam engines and all four ships were converted to oil burning during the 1930s.

TIMAVO slipped out of Durban just before Italy declared war in 1940 and ran aground on the Zululand coast, becoming a total loss.

ROSANDRA was sunk by a British submarine off the coast of Albania on 15 June 1943 and PIAVE is believed to have been lost during the War.

DUCHESSA D'ACOSTA was taken over by the Allies in 1943 and sailed as EMPIRE YUKON until the end of the War. She then sailed as the Glasgow registered PETCONNIE before reverting to Italian ownership as the LIU O, being scrapped in the late 1950s.

THE FLY REPORT

An engineer is sent to an isolated station in the bundu to take daily instrument readings, but the flies nearly drive him mad. He requests the installation of fly screens but is turned down. He mounts a campaign to get fly screens by doing a daily fly-count which he collates into a weekly fly report which he dutifully sends to Head Office. After a month, statistics department allocates a computer to him, with an instruction to do a full trend analysis with standard deviations and growth projection matrices. Then he is told to submit the full report, with appendices, in triplicate, because there is

uncertainty about which department holds jurisdiction over the fly reports: health, wildlife conservation or sports and recreation.

Soon he is sending 75 copies to different sections, and it is taking him three and a half days out of every week to count the flies, complete the reports, answer a steady stream of queries and do the filing.

After six months he receives a circular telling him that a Fly Control department has been established. It is headed by a General Manager (Strategic Fly Technologies), two assistant GMs (Flies and other insects) with a department of 27 officials and clerical staff.

After a year he is transferred away and replaced. Within three weeks the new man gets an imperious memo from Head Office asking why the fly reports have stopped coming. He is told to report for a three week Fly training course.

Six months later the screens are installed and the new man asks to discontinue the reports. He is told to continue submitting a nil return.

Rebelliously he begins omitting a few names from his mailing list every week until he stops sending reports entirely. On his next visit to Head Office he finds that the department has grown to 174 people with 11 different subsections. It has been awarded several prizes for achievements in communication, security, career path planning and executive catering.

No-one has noticed that the fly reports no longer arrive.